



DIOCESE *of* PROVIDENCE

be well.

SAFEGUARDING YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH

PROBLEM



US Surgeon General's Advisory Report

FROM 2021

01

Cites alarming increase in prevalence of youth mental health difficulties during recent years



02

Most notably, symptoms of anxiety, depression, self-harm and suicidal ideation

03

In addition, rates of suicide among young persons have increased dramatically

YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH



Positive Indicators

1

Overall happiness

2

Positive self-esteem
and confidence

3

Active engagement
and enjoyment of life

4

Hopeful, optimistic

5

Healthy and
positive relationships
with family and friends

6

A clear sense of
personhood and belonging

7

An experience of faith and
sense of purpose in life

YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH



Positive Indicators

8

Focused on positive goals and achievement

9

Attentive to healthy self-care

10

Avoidance of alcohol and other drugs

11

Resilient in dealing with normal challenges or disappointments

Possible Warning Signs



Appears sad,
depressed,
and/or anxious
much of the time

Emotional distress;
tearfulness, anger,
irritability

Expresses sense
of hopelessness,
pessimism

Negative, critical
statements about
self and/or others

Sudden,
unpredictable
changes in mood
or behavior

Decreased interest
in normal activities

Difficulties coping
with normal
responsibilities

Persistent worries
or fears

Regularly reports not
feeling well;
complaints of physical
pain, headache,
stomach ache

Gender dysphoria
/ confusion

Difficulties with
fitting in or
getting along with
others

Persistent sense of
loneliness, increased social
withdrawal, isolation, over-
involvement with social
media

Possible Warning Signs for Suicidal Thoughts or Plans

Makes statements and/or writes about self-harm, death or suicide (e.g. social media, journaling)

Comments about feeling hopeless, helpless, worthless; no reason for living

Social withdrawal from family, friends, community; isolation

Reckless behavior or engaging in risky activities; increase in alcohol or drug use

Dramatic mood changes

Experience of recent significant loss, trauma, abuse, bullying

Recent exposure to the suicide of another person; history of suicide in the family; or previous suicide attempt(s); access to firearms

Supportive Interventions

Take time to greet individuals each day and check in at natural break times

Intentional sharing of one's faith experience in a natural way with individuals

Provide opportunities for small group peer to peer support, social skills development, and faith sharing

Teach and remind individuals to use calming methods (relaxed breathing, muscle relaxation)

Communicate information on a designated safe space for individuals to access when in distress

Reach out to those who appear to be struggling

Find a safe space to talk

Employing a calm, supportive manner, ask the individual how they are doing: "Are you doing OK?"

Ask if the individual would like to talk: "Is there something that would be helpful for you to talk about?"

"What would be helpful for you right now?" or "How could I be helpful to you?"

"Do you feel like you can remain in class, or do you need a break?"

Listen for understanding

Remain calm and provide empathy and reassurance

Ask whether there's a family member or friend who could be helpful

If available, arrange for the individual to speak with a school counselor or other support person

Ask if the individual feels safe or experiencing any thoughts of self-harm: "Do you feel safe?"



Supportive Interventions



If thoughts of self-harm, but not imminent, contact parent in the presence of the individual and make a referral to a counselor

If actively suicidal, this is a psychiatric emergency; immediately call 911 while maintaining safety

It is recommended to establish clear protocols and effective communication in responding to individuals who are struggling with mental health difficulties

Identify immediate contact person for teachers to notify as needed

Local Resources



Butler Hospital

Behavioral Health Services Call Center:
24/7 access to support (844) 401-0111



BHLink

Call center 24/7 access to support
(401) 414-5465 or visit BHLink 24/7
triage center at bmlink.org



Samaritans of RI

(401) 272-4044

Other Resources for Immediate Support



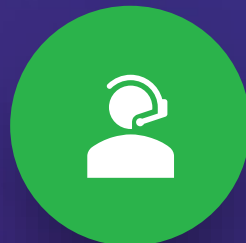
Parents Helping Parents

Parental Stress Line
(800) 632-8188



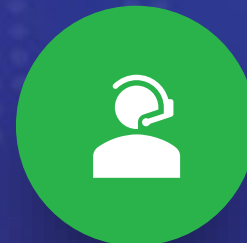
Kids' Link RI

24/7 Crisis Line
(855) 543-5465



National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

Call 988



Samaritans 24/7 Call Line

(877) 870-4673

Additional resources for supportive information



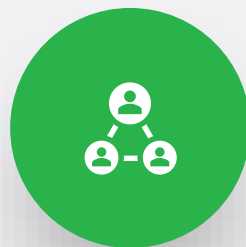
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Children's Mental Health"



National Alliance on Mental Illness

Name.org



National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry

Youth Mental Health Resources



U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory

Protecting Youth Mental Health (2021)

REPORTING

Those who suspect abuse or neglect are obligated to make verbal report to the agency:



1-800-RI-CHILD

Failure to report known or suspected child abuse or neglect is a violation of the law (R.I.G.L. 40-11-6-1).

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

A report of the observation or complaint shall be made immediately to:

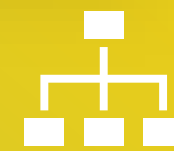
01

The immediate supervisor of the employee or volunteer.



02

Supervisory personnel shall immediately inform the Diocesan Vicar General or the Director of the Office of Compliance.



03

When an uncertainty exists whether a situation or conduct is in violation, contact the Director of the Office of Compliance.



04

Do not hesitate to contact local law enforcement immediately if the safety of an individual or child is at risk.



— INVESTIGATIONS/PASTORAL OUTREACH

Important Numbers



DIOCESE *of*
PROVIDENCE

OFFICE OF COMPLIANCE

401-941-0760



DIOCESE *of*
PROVIDENCE

OFFICE OF OUTREACH
AND PREVENTION

401-946-0728



80 Saint Mary's Drive, Cranston RI 02920